

AN  
ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC,  
ON  
SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

(By C. B.)

THE Education of Youth is a subject worthy the most serious attention of mankind in general, and of every individual in particular. The neglect of it, is one principal cause of the misery of families, cities, and nations: ignorance, vice, and misery, being constant companions. The hardest heart must melt at the melancholy sight of such a multitude of children, both male and female, in this town, who live in gross ignorance, infidelity, and habitual profanation of the Lord's day. What crowds fill the streets or the fields, tempting each other to idleness, play, lewdness, and every other species of wickedness. Is it any wonder, we should have so many undutiful children, unfaithful apprentices, and disobedient servants, ungenerous members of society, and disloyal subjects? Whence so much rapine, fornication, and blasphemy? Do not all these centre in ignorance, and contempt of the sabbath-day? What then can be done to prevent the

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the growing evil? To dispel darkness, check the progress of vice, and save youth from impending destruction? To attempt a remedy is laudable and divine.

Some time ago, the Clergyman of Stroud, in Gloucestershire, began an Institution which was called a *Sunday School*, and which has been attended with happy consequences. Since then, a Clergyman of Leeds adopted the same institution, and others have followed his example, and improved his plan.

The present state of *Sunday Schools* at Leeds is to this purpose: The Town being divided into 7 Divisions, has in it 26 Schools, 44 or 45 Masters, and above 2000 Scholars, each Master having about 40 under his care. In each School are one, two, or three Masters, according to its size and the number of Scholars. As it is not so customary for children to play in a morning, and lest too much confinement should weary them, they enter the School at one o'clock in the afternoon, and are kept in till the evening comes on, according to the time of the year, being only permitted to ask out, or go one by one. They are conducted by their respective Masters to Church; part of them goes to the three Churches at three o'clock, the rest to Evening Prayers at six o'clock, in their turns. They are instructed in reading, writing, and the Principles of Christianity. Most of the Masters, being reputed pious men, set them useful copies, and endeavour



endeavour to impress their minds with things which concern *their everlasting peace*. Towards evening is read a portion of some useful book, a Psalm is sung, and the whole concluded with a Form of Prayer composed and printed for that purpose. The Boys and Girls are kept separate. It is intended there should be three or four Inquisitors, or Persons whose office will be to spend the afternoon (except when at places of Worship) in going to visit from School to School, to take down the names of those who are absent, to seek for them in the streets, or inquire for them of their Parents. Each Master has the names of his Scholars written, and must call them over twice a day, viz. at half past one, and half past five.

In each Division is a Treasurer, who receives and pays all the money. The money is collected by two persons from house to house, in each Division, and among the richer inhabitants, either for the year, or only a quarter. The Schools are hired at the prices of 11. 10s. or 11. 1s. or 15s. per ann. The Masters have 2s. or 1s. 6d. per day, according to their qualifications. The Charity finds books, benches, writing desk, paper, pens and ink, &c.

Five Clergymen visit the Schools at their pleasure, and say what they please to the Scholars; the Treasurers, who are all serious men, do the same: others call in as they chuse, to see that every thing is properly conducted.

conducted. The Subscriptions have not yet amounted to the expence of the first year, which is about 234l. but are expected they soon will. The treasurers of richer Divisions assist the others with what money is wanted. Rules are not yet printed, nor any formal Trustees appointed, as it was thought the business might be much better conducted in the above method; the Institution being in its infancy, alterations may be expected as circumstances may require.

The happy success of the above Plan has been obvious to all who have inquired into it, and has induced several ingenious and worthy persons of Manchester to adopt it, with some little alterations and improvements: But to carry on the execution, they most humbly solicit the assistance of the candid and well-disposed Public, for which the rising Generation will have reason to bless them; while truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us, under the approbation of our happy Constitution, and the benediction of Almighty God!

Manchester, August 1, 1784.

N. B. *This Address to the Public, being patronized by the Magistrates of Manchester, had the desired Effect of establishing Sunday Schools in that populous Town and Neighbourhood.*





